England. Church of

REMARKS

ON THE

PUBLIC SERVICE

OF THE

CHURCH;

WITH SOME

DIRECTIONS

FOR OUR

BEHAVIOUR THERE.

BY A

CLERGYMAN of the CHURCH of ENGLAND.

Highly proper to be underſtood by

PEOPLE of all RANKS and AGES.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE little attention, *now*, paid, to the *beauty*, and, *performance* of divine ſervice, renders a treatiſe, on that ſubject, highly neceſſary. To this end, the author of the following ſheets has ſelected, from BISSE's *Beauty of Holineſs*, ſuch remarks on the nature of our public worſhip, as are proper to be known by all; and, has interſperſed, through the whole, ſuch obſervations, and, directions of his *own*, as, he flatters himſelf, if *rightly* attended to, muſt be greatly conducive to the *ſalvation* of *all* men. If they bring about the reformation of a *few*, 'twill be his greateſt boaſt; if productive only of *one*, he ſhall, yet, think himſelf amply rewarded.

ADDRESSED TO THE

CHRISTIAN READER.

THE public worſhip of almighty God being the indiſpenſable duty of a chriſtian, from which no man, of what rank ſoever, is exempted, it ſhould certainly be our principal care to perform it conſcientiouſly; and, conſidering the greatneſs and majeſty of that God we, *there*, adore, the reſpect we owe him, and, the abject condition of ourſelves, it is highly incumbent on us to have an eye to our deportment, and, to be particularly cautious, that our behaviour at church be decent, regular, and, uniform, as becoming "members of "one body, whereunto we are called."

IN order, to give the ſincere chriſtian ſome inſight into the nature of our public ſervice, I will run through the ſeveral parts of it, ſhew him the great propriety of the whole, and, give him ſome directions for his behaviour in the courſe of it.

YOUR ENTRANCE INTO CHURCH,

ſhould be humble, and, modeſt, quiet, and, ſedate; remembering you are treading upon "hallowed ground," and, in the preſence of a ſuperior Being, who nicely examines into the minuteſt part of our conduct. When arrived at your ſeat, fall down upon your knees, and, make uſe of ſome ſuch ſhort private prayer, as this:

"Suffer me, O Lord, a miſerable ſinner, to fall down and "worſhip thee, make me a clean heart, and, renew a right "ſpirit within me; ſettle my wanderings, ſtrengthen my "devotion, and, accept the offerings of an humble heart. "Hear me, gracious Lord, for thine only ſon, Jeſus Chriſt's "ſake. *Amen.*

I am very loath, and, ſhould be ſorry to think uncharitably of any one, but, I have too much reaſon to fear, that there are ſome in every congregation, that make it a rule, at their entrance into, and, going out of church, to kneel down out of form, in compliance with cuſtom; and, when on their knees, have nothing to ſay: I muſt beg leave to tell theſe perſons, if any ſuch there are, that acts like theſe are very inconſiderate, little better than mocking the Moſt High; 'tis "bowing the "knee," and, as it were, "ſpitting in his face."

WHEN we are aſſembled in the houſe of God, to worſhip him, that we may not ruſh, unprepared, on a work ſo ſacred, the miniſter is directed to awaken our thoughts by an awful

EXHORTATION,

which he firſt introduces by ſeveral ſentences taken out of ſcripture, exhorting, inviting, and, intreating us to repentance; in effect, ſaying, "Hear what comfortable words our "Saviour ſaith to all them, that with hearty repentance, and, "true faith, turn unto him;" hear alſo what St. *John*, what *David*, *Daniel*, *Joel*, or, other prophets, ſay; and, then, aſſures us, that not only in *theſe*, but, in "*ſundry* places, the "ſcripture moveth us to confeſs our manifold ſins and wick-"edneſs." In which exhortation, the miniſter, beſides his moving us to confeſſion, reminds us of all the ſolemn ends of our meeting, to which *that* is preparatory; namely, "to "render thanks to God, and, ſet forth his moſt worthy "praiſe," as in the *Pſalms*; "to hear his moſt holy word," read to them in the *Leſſons*; "and, to aſk thoſe things that are "neceſſary, as well for the body, as the ſoul," provided for us in the *Collects* and *Litany*.

As there are variety of diſpoſitions in every congregation, this exhortation appears with greater propriety, being calculated to inſtruct the ignorant, admoniſh the negligent, ſupport the fearful, comfort the doubtful, caution the formal, and, check the preſumptuous *.

* The neceſſity of preparation for prayer, is evident from the following text, "Before thou prayeſt, prepare thyſelf; and, be "not as one that tempteth the Lord." Ecclus. xviii. 23.

WHILST

WHILST the minister is reading this exhortation, every person, standing, ought diligently to listen to its sense, and, not ignorantly, as the manner of some is, repeat the words after him; (of which I shall take more notice by and by) in so doing, they will be better prepared to join him, in

THE CONFESSION

to God, following. This solemn *confession* takes in all kinds of sin, as well those of *omission*, "in leaving un- "done those things which we ought to have done," as those of *commission*, "in doing those things which we ought not to "have done;" and, whilst every single person makes this *general* confession, with his *lips*, he may call over, in his mind, his own personal sins, such as are known only to God and himself, and, make a *particular* confession of them, with his *heart*; which, if particularly, though secretly, confessed, and, repented of, will assuredly be forgiven. The people are here enjoined to repeat each sentence after the minister, and, that with an *audible* voice, that none may offend, through a notorious omission; but, yet, with an "*humble* voice," that all speaking together, may not breed confusion; for, if every worshipper does not repeat the *whole* form, confessing his own sins with his own mouth, it would not be, in a proper sense, *confession*, but, *consent*. The same may be said of the *Confessions* of faith, in the *Creeds*.

THIS confession of sins being properly made, by the whole congregation, the *priest*, standing up, doth, in the name, and, by the commission of God, pronounce

THE ABSOLUTION,

which, if rightly understood, believed, and, embraced by the confessing penitent, ought to be of like comfort to *him*, as that declaration of Christ was to the man sick of the palsy, "be "of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee." Matt. ix. 2.

IN order, to set the devout worshipper right, with respect to the difference of expression in the three forms of absolution met with in the church-service, namely, this now before us,

that in the *communion*, and, the other in the *viſitation of the ſick*, it may not be unneceſſary to give him biſhop *Sparrow*'s opinion on this head. All theſe forms (ſays he) are but ſeveral expreſſions of the ſame thing, being, in ſenſe and virtue, perfectly the ſame; which he thus exemplifies. When a prince hath granted a commiſſion to any ſervant of his, to releaſe out of priſon all penitent offenders whatſoever, it is the ſame, in effect, whether this ſervant ſays, by virtue of a commiſſion granted unto me, under the prince's hand and ſeal, which here I ſhew, I releaſe this priſoner: or thus, the prince, who hath given me this commiſſion, *he* pardons you: or, laſtly, the prince pardon and deliver you; the prince then ſtanding by, and, confirming the word of his ſervant. So it is here all one as to the remiſſion of ſins in the penitent, whether the prieſt abſolves him after this form: almighty God, who hath given me, and, all prieſts, power to pronounce pardon to the penitent, *He pardons you*: or, thus, by virtue of a commiſſion granted to me from God, *I abſolve you*: or, laſtly, *God pardon you*, by me, his ſervant, according to his promiſe, "whoſoever ſins ye remit, they are remitted." John xx. 23. 'Tis on this account, that the church hath not allowed this form of abſolution to be pronounced by a *deacon*, to whom that commiſſion is not given; but, hath reſerved it to the *prieſts*, who, at their ordination, are inveſted with that authority.

GIVE me leave, now, to obſerve, how abſurd it is for any one to repeat the words of this abſolution after the miniſter, ſince even a *deacon* is not permitted to do it. The very *Rubrick** appoints it, in expreſs terms, to be pronounced by the prieſt, *alone*; he *ſtanding*, to ſhew his authority, God having

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* The *Rubricks* are thoſe rules, or orders, directing how, when, and where all things, in divine ſervice, are to be performed, which, for diſtinction's ſake, are printed in *Italick* letters, and, are ſet over the prayers, and, different parts of the ſervice, throughout the book of common-prayer.

given

given him power and commandment to abſolve the people, being penitent: the people are ordered to continue ſtill *kneeling*, a poſture proper to ſhew, that they *are* penitent, and, deſirous of abſolution. Now the abſolution ends at the words, "unfeignedly believe his holy goſpel;" the words following, "wherefore, let us beſeech him to grant us, &c." quite to the end, are an exhortation, teaching us what things, at preſent, to pray for, namely, "repentance, and, his holy ſpirit;" which the prieſt, afterwards, *kneeling*, doth, together with the people, pray for, in the *Lord's prayer*. The former words of this form, then, being an *abſolution*, the latter, an *exhortation*, both belonging to the office of the *prieſt*, the people ought to receive the one, and, liſten to the other; and, by no means, repeat either after him. For, are *they* appointed to exhort? Are *they* impowered to abſolve? This cuſtom, too common in practice, even among devout perſons, is founded on ſo groſs an ignorance, that I am almoſt tempted to call it a *ſin* of ignorance.

As to the *Lord's prayer*, the church hath appointed it to be ſaid by the whole congregation, kneeling, chiefly in obedience to our Saviour's injunctions, who commanded it to be ſaid by his diſciples, whenever they prayed; but, in all the other prayers, which are called *Collects*, the people are to accompany the miniſter only "with a pure *heart*;" and, at the cloſe, to anſwer, *Amen*, with an "humble *voice*."

PEOPLE are apt to ſay, in anſwer to this, that repeating the words, ſilently, after the miniſter, is a help to devotion, it fixing the *attention* of the mind, from *wandering*. To remedy this inconvenience, I would recommend *reading* the form, rather than *rehearſing* it *aloud*; the *ſilent eye* is as ſure a guard, and, a more decent guide, than the *ſounding voice*. Perhaps, you are able to repeat all the ſervice by heart; very commendable it is; but, keep it to yourſelf, and, let not *your* advantage be an inconvenience to *others*.

IN oppoſition to this, there are ſome, that never open their mouths from the time of their *entrance* into church, till the moment

moment of their departure; a fault too general, eſpecially, among the common, and, more ignorant ſort of the people. But, I muſt aſk ſuch, and, all others guilty of this groſs offence, what they mean, by not bearing a part in thoſe rehearſals, which are appointed, in common, to the whole congregation? Do they go to the houſe of prayer to be ſpectators, or, worſhippers? Or, do they imagine the whole ſervice is to be tranſacted between the miniſter and the clerk?

If it ſhould be aſked, to what uſe or purpoſe, then, is the office of a *pariſh clerk* appointed, and, a ſeat erected for him in the church, if not that, in the public anſwers and parts he may ſupply, and, be inſtead of a mouth for the congregation? If this be (as I fear it is) a vulgar error crept in among our people, it is ſo *groſs* an error, ſo directly contrary to the intention of our church, that, as it were to prevent and beat down ſuch a conceit, the *Rubricks* no where take notice of ſuch office, or, once mention the title of *Clerk* *. Where the miniſter is ordered by the *Rubrick* to begin the confeſſion, "The whole *congregation*," (not the *clerk*) are ordered to "ſay it after him." Where the prieſt is appointed to pronounce the abſolution, "the *people*" (not any *ſingle* perſon) are appointed, "at the end of that, and, of all other prayers, "to anſwer, *Amen*."

Custom has, indeed, introduced the office of *clerk* into our pariſh churches, obliging him to a conſtant attendance on the public ſervice; but, to this intent, that the worſhip might not ſuffer by a general neglect, either in the abſence, or, anſwers of the people; not that ſuch perſon ſhould ſupply, or, excuſe either.

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* The Rubrick before the Lord's prayer, (after the apoſtles creed) faith, "The miniſter, *clerks*, and, people, ſhall ſay it "with a loud voice;" but, *clerks*, here, does not mean the *pariſh* clerk; for, it ſpeaks of *many* clerks, and, means *real* clerks, (*clergymen*,) referring only to choirs in cathedral churches, where many ſuch *clerks* are ſuppoſed to be preſent.

But

BUT, alas! how ſhall all perſons *join* in the ſervice, unleſs they *read?* and, how ſhall they *read*, without a *book?* Is it not then aſtoniſhing, that the book of *common prayer* ſhould appear in ſo few hands, throughout a whole congregation! *Many* an idle ſhilling do men throw away upon the moſt *triſling* occaſions, and, yet, not afford *one* in the ſervice of *religion!* Can any man go forth to his weekly labour, without the *inſtruments* neceſſary to his work, unleſs he reſolves to "ſtand "all the day idle?" The ſame declared reſolution muſt that worſhipper (if he may be called a *worſhipper*) be underſtood to bring with him, if he preſumes to go to church without his *prayer-book*; for, to the want of this beſt, and, *neceſſary companion* in the church, is chiefly owing that general neglect of *not joining*, at all, in the public worſhip; as the want of *underſtanding it*, is the cauſe of the ſeveral improprieties committed by ſome that *do*.

BEFORE I diſmiſs this ſubject, let me exhort you to be conſtantly in church before the *Confeſſion*, otherwiſe you loſe the great benefit of *abſolution*; I call the benefit of abſolution *great*, becauſe it ſanctifies all your offerings, and, makes you fit to go through the remaining parts of the ſervice. Every one, when he ſtands before God, is to be looked upon, like *Joſhua*, the high-prieſt, "as cloathed in filthy garments;" but, after he has confeſſed, and repented of his ſins, then the Lord ſaith to the prieſt, appointed to pronounce the abſolution, as he did to thoſe that ſtood by *Joſhua*, "take away the filthy "garments from him;" and, to the perſon, thus abſolved, he ſaith, as he did to *Joſhua*, "Behold, I have cauſed thine "iniquity to paſs from thee, and, I will cloath thee with "change of raiment." Zech. iii. 3, 4. Such, therefore, as go in, after the *Abſolution* is read, however prepared, and, arrayed in their own righteouſneſs, may look upon themſelves, ſtill, as "cloathed in filthy garments," and, not in a fit condition to worſhip the Lord, in his holy temple.

THE *confeſſion*, and, *abſolution*, followed by the *Lord's prayer*, make the whole ſervice, as far as this, a diſtinct, *penitential*

nitential office. We now proceed to that of *thanksgiving*, the nobleſt part of our worſhip.

OUR offerings of *praiſe* are *now* introduced by *petition*, as *confeſſion* of ſins *was* by *exhortation*. The miniſter ſtill on his knees, beginning in the language of the penitent Pſalmiſt, "O Lord, open thou our lips:" the people anſwering, "and, our mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy praiſe." (Pſal. li. 15.) A very proper introduction after confeſſion of ſin, the ſenſe of which is ſuppoſed to ſeal down our lips, and, make all fleſh dumb before God. Again, the miniſter prays, "O God, "make ſpeed to ſave us," namely, from the manifold ſins we have confeſſed. The people proceed, "O Lord, make "haſte to help us," namely, in the great duties we are now entering upon. Riſing, then, on our feet, we begin the work of praiſe, with that moſt excellent doxology, "Glory be to "the Father, &c." attended with that angelical exclamation, HALLELUJAH, which being interpreted, is, "Praiſe ye the "Lord;" the people returning it, with a united voice, "The "Lord's name be praiſed." Then, follows

THE INVITATORY PSALM, &c.

O come let us ſing unto the Lord, &c.

THIS pſalm, which contains a threefold exhortation; to *thankſgiving*, "O come, let us ſing, &c." to *prayer*, "O come, let us fall down, &c." to *hearing*, "To-day, "if you will hear, &c." is placed, with great propriety, before the rehearſal of the general Pſalms, which, themſelves, may be called a leſſer liturgy; for, in them are contained confeſſions, thankſgivings, praiſes, prayers, interceſſions, inſtructions, in all things anſwering to our public ſervice.

THE manner in which the Pſalms ſhould be rehearſed, is alternate, or, by turns; according to the pattern ſet us by the church in heaven, where the ſeraphims are ſaid to "cry one "to another," Iſai. vi. 3. which cuſtom is judiciouſly preſerved in our church, in appointing them to be *ſung*, as in our *cathedral* ſervice; or, *ſaid*, as in our *parochial* worſhip: for, in thus ſinging or rehearſing by turns, the miniſter and people

provoke, and, relieve each other's piety; they *provoke* it by this holy *contention*, and, *relieve* it, by this *interchange*.

We are directed to recite the Pſalms, *ſtanding*; conformable to holy *David*'s rule; "O praiſe the Lord, *ſtanding*, in the "courts of the Lord." Pſal. 134. By this *erection* of the body, we expreſs the *elevation* of the *ſoul*, when, in *thankſgiving*, we *lift it up* unto the Lord; in the ſame manner, as, by *kneeling down*, we expreſſed the *contrition* of our *hearts*, when, in *confeſſion* of ſin, we *humbled* them before the throne of grace: theſe poſtures of kneeling and ſtanding being natural indications of the affections of the heart. After the Pſalms, follow

The Leſſons, Hymns, &c.

For having (according to the exhortation) "ſet forth "God's moſt worthy praiſe," we proceed to "hear his "moſt holy word;" and, thus, a reſpite or intermiſſion is given to the bent of the mind: for, as, in the work of *praiſe*, it was *active*; in *hearing*, it is merely *attentive*. In the *Pſalms*, the *will* and *affections* were employed; but, in the *Leſſons*, 'tis chiefly the *underſtanding*.

Thus, when the ſoul has been exalted by *acts of praiſe*, it is the more awakened to holy *ſpeculation*, opened to us in the ſcriptures; and, when delighted with *ſpeculation*, in "be-"holding the wondrous works of God's law," it eagerly returns to *thankſgiving*: for which purpoſe, the church hath appointed theſe two ancient hymns, "We praiſe thee, O "God, &c." and, "O, all ye works of the Lord, &c." the former framed for conſtant uſe; the latter, for more particular occaſions.

As the *interpoſal* of this hymn, after the *firſt leſſon*, gives the mind a reſpite from the work of attention, ſo the *loftineſs* of it lifts up the mind, and, prepares it for attending to the higher things revealed in the goſpel, which, now, in the *ſecond leſſon*, are read to the congregation. Then, follows a ſong of praiſe, "Bleſſed be the Lord, &c." or, that pſalm, "O be "joyful, &c." Thus, after each leſſon, ſucceeds a hymn;

after the *hearing* of the *ear*, follows the *rejoicing* of the *lips*; which (excluſive of the relief ariſing to the worſhipper, and, the beauty to the worſhip, by this interchange and variety) has alſo this advantage, that we, here, declare our aſſent to the ſcriptures read unto us, while we magnify their excellence.

IN like manner, the leſſons for the *evening* ſervice, are followed by their reſpective hymns. Two are provided after each leſſon, for variety; though the one (as I before remarked) is chiefly adapted to the daily ſervice, the other, for more feſtival ſeaſons, it being left to the miniſter to vary and apply them to the occaſion.

WHILST, therefore, the leſſons are reading, you ſhould not ſuffer them to paſs away unattended to, conſidering them as a mere hiſtory, or, the word of man; but, reverently liſten to them, as they are, "in truth, the word of God." For the miniſter, in reading the ſcriptures, is, even as *Aaron* was, the mouth of God to the people; for which reaſon, he is directed to turn his face to them, as ſpeaking from God, and, to read, *ſtanding*, to ſignify his authority. When, therefore, he ſtands up, to read the leſſons, let every devout hearer ſay within himſelf, "Speak, Lord, for thy ſervant heareth," 1 Sam. iii. 9. and, not trifle away the precious moments in whiſpering his idle converſation to the perſon next him, as (I am ſorry to ſay it) is, too frequently, the caſe; but, let him hearken, and, apply what he hears; if *examples*, let theſe *lead* him; if *precepts*, let theſe *teach* him; if *commands*, let theſe *bind* him; if *promiſes*, let theſe *encourage* him; if *threats*, let theſe *warn* him; if *mercies*, let theſe *comfort* him; and, if *judgments*, let theſe *awaken* him.

WHEN the two leſſons are thus followed by their reſpective hymns, then, comes on a rehearſal of

THE CREED,

by all the congregation, in which they give their aſſent, not only to the particular ſcriptures they have lately heard, but, to all the articles of the chriſtian faith, which are clearly contained in the body of thoſe ſcriptures.

THIS

THIS confeſſion of faith is directed to be made by the *whole* congregation, the people repeating it after the miniſter; for, it is not enough for a chriſtian to believe rightly with his heart, unleſs he confeſs the ſame openly with his mouth. For this reaſon, the *Creed* is ſo formed, as to be rehearſed by every one, in his own perſon. We do not confeſs in conjunction, ſaying, "*We* believe, &c." but, each for himſelf, ſaying, "*I* believe, &c." Deceive not yourſelf, therefore, imagining, that if the *miniſter* recites the *Creed*, and, *you* ſay, *Amen*, at the cloſe, that *this* will be ſufficient; for the miniſter's confeſſion, *here*, is perſonal, made only for *himſelf*, ſaying, as every other perſon, *I believe*; he is, therefore, only a *guide* to the congregation, the hand that leads them on in their confeſſion; on which account, the people, *all*, ought to follow him, with an audible voice.

AT the rehearſal of the Creeds, there are two ancient cuſtoms, *continued* in our church, though not *enjoined*, which *have been*, and, ſtill *are*, *rejected* by *ſome*, as *ſuperſtitious*, and, *declined* by others, as *inconvenient*: however, as they are cuſtoms that ought to be obſerved, I ſhall not paſs over them in ſilence.

THE firſt, is that of turning towards the eaſt, or, chancel, the accuſtomed place of the holy table: which took its riſe from hence. Before the birth of our Saviour, the *Gentiles* did all, generally, worſhip the ſun; in conſequence of which, their worſhip was directed towards the *eaſt*, the place of his riſing. After Chriſt's death, therefore, when their temples became hallowed in chriſtian churches, worſhipping *Chriſt Jeſus*, the *ſun of righteouſneſs*, they ſtill turned their faces towards the ſame place, as a ſymbolical memorial of that great "light, "which was to lighten the *Gentiles*." For this reaſon, then, the form of chriſtian churches has, from the beginning, been directed towards the eaſt. For the ſame reaſon, are our bodies, when laid in the grave, placed with the face turned the ſame way. Strange is it, then, that chriſtians ſhould, in theſe days, make it ſuperſtition to *worſhip* in that bodily poſition or

 direction,

direction, which yet they desire to be *buried* in; and, that the *grave* should teach that uniformity to the *dead*, which the *church* cannot to the *living!*

To *this* end, when seats were introduced into churches they were so disposed, as to confine all persons, whether kneeling, or, standing, to turn that way; as may be generally seen in most *country* churches. But, since through the modern, irregular form, and, inequality of seating, prevailing in cities, and, populous towns, this uniformity, through the whole service, is rendered impracticable, the observance of it is more earnestly recommended, at the rehearsal of the Creeds, that we may, in *one* instance, at least, testify, that we are *one* and the *same* body, by standing all *one* way.

Should some insist on their liberty against conforming to *this*, or, any *other* custom of the church, declaring, they are bound only to what is *enjoined*, and, not to what is *accustomed*; why do they not plead the same in *other* customs, such as, the *time* and *place* of worship, as well as in *this?* But, I fear, too many decline it, not as *superstitious*, but, merely, as *inconvenient*, and, a *trouble*; (for, there are some, that, in worshipping, will neither *turn* the *body*, nor *bend* the *knee*, because of the *trouble*; persons who are willing to "offer unto the Lord, "only that which costs them nothing.") I must be excused, if I expostulate with these, how they can make a difficulty of complying with this single ceremony, when they take great pains in turning every way to discharge their personal ceremonies to one another? Many things might be here added, to restrain those customary salutations, that are continually passing in time of divine service; not to mention that of rising from our knees, in the midst of a prayer, to compliment another with a seat; a manifest declaration of that person's want of devotion, a *disgrace* to the *worshipper*, and, an open *contempt* of that *God*, in whose sacred presence he is. However, what is here said, is but a just reproof to all those who refuse to conform to this single custom of turning to the *east*, at the rehearsing of the Creeds, when they can turn every way to salute their friends.

The

THE *ſecond* cuſtom I muſt recommend, is that of bowing at the name of *Jeſus*; and, I muſt more earneſtly recommend the obſervance of *this*, becauſe founded upon a higher reaſon, and, expreſsly enjoined by one of the canons of the church, which thus directs, "that when, in time of divine "ſervice, the Lord *Jeſus* ſhall be mentioned, that due and "lowly reverence ſhall be done by all perſons preſent, as "hath been accuſtomed; teſtifying, by this outward cere-"mony, their inward humility, and, due acknowledgment, "that *Jeſus* is the Lord," &c. in conformity to ſacred writ, which ordains, that "at the name of *Jeſus*, every knee ſhould "bow, and, every tongue confeſs, that *Jeſus Chriſt* was Lord." For which reaſon, this reverence hath been more cuſtomarily performed at the Creeds, when this acknowledgment is made in expreſs words, an article of our confeſſion, *viz. in Jeſus Chriſt, our Lord.* *

HITHERTO, then, have we ſeen our church acknowledging her ſins in the *Confeſſion*; ſetting forth God's moſt worthy praiſe, in the *Pſalms*; hearing his moſt holy word, in the *Leſſons*; and, after that, with *one* heart and mouth, declaring her aſſent to the catholic faith, in the *Creed*. Having now her *conſcience* abſolved from *ſin*, her *affections* warmed with *thankſgiving*, her *underſtanding* enlightened by the *word*, and, her *faith* ſtrengthened by her public *confeſſion*, how fit and prepared is ſhe to enter ſolemnly on ſupplication and prayer, and, in the *Collects* and *Litany*, "to aſk thoſe things "that are neceſſary, as well for the body, as the ſoul!"

NOW, that the tranſition from one office to another, may not be too abrupt, the miniſter bleſſes the people for this holy work, ſaying, "the Lord be with you;" 2 Theſſ. iii. 16. and, the people pray for him, in the diſcharge of it, replying,

* With reſpect to the *Athanaſian* creed, which is a confeſſion of our faith more at large, it being too long for the daily ſervice, our church has appointed it to be read 12 times a year; that, once in the courſe of every month, it may take its turn, in our public worſhip.

"and

" and with thy ſpirit." 2 Tim. iv. 22. But, before they all kneel down, the miniſter addreſſes the congregation in that moſt ancient form, " Let us pray;" reminding them, they are, *now*, returning to the duty of *prayer*. After this, both prieſt and people, *all kneeling*, begin with the *Lord's prayer*; which, though ſaid over once before, is, ſtill, in reality, no repetition, it being, *now*, the commencement of a diſtinct office, that of ſupplication. In the former uſe of this prayer, there went before it a confeſſion of ſin, at large; and, here, it is well introduced, by a " Lord, have mercy upon us," which is a perfect confeſſion of ſin, though wrapt up in ſo conciſe a form. It is alſo, here, being thrice repeated, an invocation to the Trinity, calling, the firſt time, on *Lord*, the Father; the ſecond, on *Chriſt*, the Son; the third, on *Lord*, the Holy Ghoſt. On this account, you muſt be careful not to ſay, " Lord, have mercy upon us," the *fourth* time, as is too often done, through ignorance: for, in doing this, you, in effect, make *four* perſons in the Trinity. This paſſage, in the cloſe of the Litany, is, indeed, to be repeated after the miniſter, *each* time; but, here, it is *not*; the *people* being only required to recite the line, " Chriſt, have mercy " upon us;" the firſt and laſt belonging to the *miniſter*.

BUT, to proceed: as the Lord's prayer is introduced by ſhort ſentences; ſo, likewiſe, it is followed by the ſame, to bring on the prayers in ſucceſſion; in reading which, the miniſter is directed to *ſtand* up, that he may be the better heard; the people to continue *kneeling*. The next that follow, is,

The COLLECTS and PRAYERS;

wherein we pray for ſuch things as are " neceſſary, both for " our ſouls and bodies;" and, for the preſervation both of church and ſtate, on which our temporal bleſſings, in a great meaſure, depend. We, next, make an *interceſſion* for the wants of *all* mankind; in which, there is a clauſe, whereby any *ſick* perſon may be prayed for in *particular*; I ſay, *ſick*, becauſe, though a perſon viſited with *any* kind of affliction, may,

may, here, enjoy the prayers of a congregation; ſtill, the church principally intends it for *bodily* ſickneſs, that perſons in this ſituation may not periſh, like *Aſa*, of whom it is recorded, for our admonition, that, "in his diſeaſe, he ſought "not to the Lord, but, the phyſicians." 2 Chron. xvi. 12. We, then, offer up a *thankſgiving*, for the many benefits we have received at the hands of God; beginning with that original bleſſing, "our creation;" then, "preſervation," attended with all the ſecondary benefits and "bleſſings of life; "but, above all," becauſe the greateſt of all, "our redemp-"tion," attended with all "the means of grace, and, hopes "of glory:" thus, aſcending through the long ſcale of bleſſings received, from temporal to ſpiritual, from the firſt to the laſt, from our coming forth *from* God, to our returning *to* him again.

HERE, alſo, is a clauſe provided, wherein particular perſons, "who have been prayed for, may return thanks;" which, let me obſerve, none ought to omit after recovery, who have, before, ſought the prayers of the church.

THIS done, we cloſe the whole with a firm *reliance* on the gracious promiſes of our *Redeemer*.

IN all theſe *collects* and *prayers*, you muſt be totally ſilent, and, attentive; not repeating the words after the miniſter, but, joining with him *only* in fervency of heart; and, at the cloſe of each, pronounce the *Amen*, (that is, *ſo be it)* audibly, and, diſtinctly; by which, we declare our aſſent to the whole.

With reſpect to

THE LITANY,

it is a general ſupplication for all temporal bleſſings, *begun* and *ended* with an invocation to the Trinity, and, is to be performed with that decency, regularity, and, order, as is enjoined in its *rubricks*. But, it may not be unneceſſary to be, here, a little more particular. The Litany, though it makes a part of our morning ſervice, is, in itſelf, a diſtinct, and, ſeparate office. After the invocation, this excellent form begins with petitions for deliverance from all evils incident to either

either ſoul or body, cloſed by an earneſt ſupplication of the people, namely, " Good Lord, deliver us." Here, I muſt obſerve, that what is ſaid, both by miniſter and people, makes but *one* ſentence: for inſtance, " From all evil and miſchief, " &c." would be imperfect, and, have no ſenſe, did not the people go on, and, fill up the ſenſe, crying, " Good Lord, " deliver us." Hence, it appears, how neceſſary it is, that theſe words ſhould not be omitted by any of the congregation; for, unleſs theſe additions are added to what the miniſter ſays, the people pray not at all.

THE interceſſionary part of this form, wherein our ſupplications are cloſed with, " we beſeech thee to hear us, good " Lord," is of the ſame kind, and, equally neceſſary to be obſerved, as the former.

THE concluſion of this office is no leſs excellent than the beginning, winding up, and, enforcing all with redoubled vehemency and flame of devotion, in alternate petitions between prieſt and people, and, a prayer for aid, in trouble and affliction.

HERE, in order, to divide the ſervice, is introduced a portion of the ſinging-pſalms, which, however trivial it may be thought, is, nevertheleſs, one principal part of divine worſhip. We are directed to *ſing* " with the ſpirit and the underſtand- " ing," which is impoſſible to be *properly* done, upon our ſeats, as is, too frequently, the caſe. Let every perſon, therefore, riſe upon his feet, and, add *his* ſongs of praiſe to thoſe of *others*, not ſo loud, as to be heard alone, but, yet, enough to increaſe the ſwell, and, convince his God, that he is not backward, in raiſing his voice in ſounds of praiſe, and, ſongs of general thankſgiving.

THE COMMUNION SERVICE.

THE directions reſpecting this, are, univerſally, the ſame, as thoſe of other parts of our ſervice; that we ſhould be particularly careful in obeying the injunctions laid down in the *Rubricks*.

THIS

THIS *ſecond* ſervice, as it is ſometimes called, begins with the *Lord*'s-prayer, which is followed by one for *ſanctification*. After this preparation, the prieſt, turning to the people, rehearſes, diſtinctly, the ten commandments, which the people are to receive, *kneeling*, the poſture of reverence and ſubmiſſion to what God commands, who, at this time, the prieſt is ſuppoſed to repreſent. Next follows a prayer for the king: after this, the collect for the day: and, then, two portions of ſcripture, one called the *Epiſtle*; the other, the *Goſpel*. The Epiſtle, being inſtituted to repreſent the law, preceeding the Goſpel, is always read firſt, during which time, the people are allowed to *ſit*; but, at the reading of the goſpels, as being of more importance, they are directed to *ſtand* up, as a mark of greater reſpect. The *Nicene Creed* follows the *Epiſtles* and *Goſpels*, as that of the *Apoſtle's* Creed does the *Leſſons*, and, for the ſame reaſons; becauſe, as "faith comes by hearing, ſo, with "the mouth, confeſſion is made unto ſalvation." Rom. x. 10.

THE SERMON.

THE prayers thus ended, the miniſter is directed to inſtruct his congregation, by an expoſition of ſome part of the holy ſcriptures: during which time, it is expected, that the people are attentive, and, that they endeavour to profit by what he ſays. This the church, in one of her canons, has particularly enjoined; where it is expreſsly ſaid, that "none, either "man, woman, or, child, of what calling ſoever, ſhall, in "time of divine ſervice, be otherwiſe buſied in the church, "than in quiet attendance to hear, mark, and, underſtand, "that which is read, preached, and, miniſtered: neither "ſhall they diſturb the ſervice, or, ſermon, by walking, or, "talking, or, any other way; nor, depart out of the church, "during the time of ſervice, or, ſermon, without ſome ur-"gent, or, reaſonable cauſe."

THE BLESSING.

WHEN the ſermon is over, the congregation is, generally, diſmiſſed with a bleſſing. This was ſo highly eſteemed in

ancient times, that no one was ſuffered to go out of church, till he had received it; and, whilſt it was delivering, the people kneeled, or, bowed their heads, in imitation of the Jewiſh manner, deſcribed in Ecclus. l. 21. "When the ſer-"vice was finiſhed, the high-prieſt *lifted* up his hands over "the congregation, to give the bleſſing of the Lord with his "lips; and, they bowed themſelves, to worſhip the Lord, "that they might receive the bleſſing from the Moſt High:" conſidering it as the bleſſing, not of man, but, of God; none, therefore, ſhould preſume to depart, till this is given. This bleſſing, the *Rubrick* orders to be given by the *prieſt*, or, *biſhop*, and, therefore, ought not to be pronounced, even by a *deacon*, much leſs, by the people: their repeating it, therefore, after the miniſter, is not only a mark of the groſſeſt ignorance, but, an unjuſt uſurpation of the prieſtly office.

Going out of Church.

The ſervice thus ended, the people are at liberty to depart: but, firſt, it is expected, that they ſhould make uſe of ſome ſuch ſhort, private prayer, as follows, as at their entrance into church: as for inſtance:

"Make me not, O Lord, a *hearer* only, but, a *doer* of "thy word: teach me to profit by what I have, this day, "heard; impreſs it deeply upon my heart, that it may bring "forth fruits meet for repentance. Grant this, gracious "Lord, for thine only Son, Jeſus Chriſt's ſake."

I have, now, gone through the deſign I propoſed; a work, if little *entertaining*, yet, I hope, greatly *edifying*: a work, I am ſure, at *no* time unſerviceable; at *theſe* times, far from unſeaſonable. I ſhall, therefore, conclude, with ſome few obſervations I have had occaſion to make, in the courſe of my miniſtry; and, add ſuch directions, as appear to me highly neceſſary to be obſerved.

First, then, let your entrance into church be *early*; if poſſible, before the general *confeſſion*; otherwiſe, as I ſaid before, you loſe the great benefit of *abſolution*, without which, your prayers are void of that holineſs, neceſſary to make them

accepted

accepted of the Lord. Should it happen, that the ſervice is begun, before you enter, be particularly careful not to diſturb the reſt, either by ſhuffling along the iſle, or, walking in pattens; nor preſume to take your ſeat, while the people are on their knees, if doing it will give the leaſt diſturbance; but, kneel down in any vacant ſpot, or, quietly and humbly, wait, till ſuch time as the congregation changes its poſition.

SECONDLY, Let thoſe who are troubled with any violent cough, omit attending on *public* worſhip, till ſuch time as they are better; for, in ſuch caſes, God will readily accept of their *private* devotions, when done with a conſcientious and pious intention.

THIS, alſo, ſhould be done by ſuch perſons as cannot attend church, without taking an infant in their arms; for, what attention can *they* pay to divine ſervice, who are conſtantly buſied in quieting a child, whoſe frequent noiſe is not only a trouble to themſelves, but, a diſturbance to the whole congregation?

THIRDLY, Let your behaviour be decent, humble, regular, and, uniform; and, in conformity to the *Rubricks*, let me entreat you, to bow down, with humility, at the *confeſſion* of ſin; riſe up, with joyfulneſs, at the rehearſal of the *Pſalms*; ſit down, with attention, at the reading of the *Leſſons*; ſtand up, with reſolution, at the recital of the *Creeds*; proſtrate yourſelf; joining, with vehemence, in the ſupplications of the *Litany*, and, liſtening, with awfulneſs, to the terror of the *Commandments*; to be conſtant, without interruption; fervent, without oſtentation.

FOURTHLY, It has been urged, in excuſe, by ſome, for not kneeling, that they have nothing to keep them from the ground, conſequently, ſhould kneel in pain, and, ſoil their cloaths; but, let ſuch people be told, that 'twas the cuſtom of the ancients, to throw themſelves proſtrate upon the ground, as a greater mark of humility and adoration; and, let them reflect, that the greater the *difficulty*, the greater the *honour*.

Where, therefore, there is even a poſſibility, let it never be omitted.

FIFTHLY, In conſequence of the *third* direction, I muſt openly condemn any kind of *trifling*, ſuch as, adjuſting of the dreſs, counting of money, cutting the nails, reading different parts of the prayer-book, and, many other things of the like nature, as I have, from time to time, obſerved, in the courſe of divine ſervice. In this, they take advantage from the height of the pews, hugging themſelves, in being obſcured from the ſight of others: but, let ſuch perſons remember, they are in the preſence, and, under the immediate eye of God, who is nicely watchful of all their actions and thoughts, and, will puniſh the offender, at a time when he leaſt expects it.

SIXTHLY, Another thing, I have, often, obſerved, and, which I cannot help taking notire of, which is, that of people's ſtarting up at the leaſt extraordinary noiſe: if a book, or ſtick, but fall, or, a dog but bark, (which animal ſhould be ſhut up at home, and, not ſuffered to enter the church, it not only being wicked and profane, but, frequently, a great diſturber of devotion) I ſay, let a ſtick but fall, a dog but bark, or, any other like trivial accident, and, you ſhall have twenty perſons ſtarting up, even from their knees, in the midſt of a prayer, and, ſtretching out their necks, to ſee what is the matter, to the great contempt of worſhip, and, the manifeſt deſtruction of devotion. Whenever I ſee this happen, I cannot but conclude, that ſuch people have not a ſpark of piety, or, the leaſt ſenſe of religion; and, am ſecretly led to wiſh, they would rather ſtay at home, than come to church, to make a mock of God, and, diſturb other people; for ſuch behaviour, as every other of the ſame kind, I have mentioned, is not only a bidding defiance to God, and, good men; but, to good ſenſe, and, good manners.

SEVENTHLY, One other thing I muſt take the liberty to mention, and, I have done; that is, the improper uſe of the *fan*; which, I fear, indulges too many with an opportunity of hiding, under the pretence of modeſty, or, that of veiling their

their faces from the inſpection of others; (an idle cuſtom this, as both face and hands ſhould be held open, and, directed up towards heaven) I ſay, I fear, it indulges too many with an opportunity of hiding, under theſe pretences, their *mock-piety*, or, what is little different, their impious *drowſineſs*, or, wilful *indevotion*. Too often, have I ſeen the profaneſt levities, and, moſt indecent fooleries, committed, behind that faſhionable machine: it may, perhaps, be of ſingular ſervice, at *other* times, and, in *other* places, by concealing a whiſper, ſparing a bluſh, or, preventing a confuſion; but, in the *houſe of God*, where every one ſhould collect their ſcattered thoughts, as if they were going to die, they ſhould not have the leaſt temptation to the contrary. It were ſincerely to be wiſhed, therefore, that the female part of every congregation would, for the future, leave this temptation to levity at home; for, a truly devout worſhipper can never want a guard againſt wanderings.

AWAKE, then, Chriſtian, reflect, and, aſk, Is the place of divine worſhip no other than the *houſe* of GOD? and, doth GOD, in very deed, dwell in that *houſe?* Are his angels, *there*, mingled with us, encompaſſing the throne of grace, the holy altar? Believeſt thou this? If ſo, how nicely careful oughteſt thou to be of thy conduct, and, behaviour, *there?*

STUDY, then, to know, and, to perform this *bleſſed* duty, and, employment, above all your *worldly* ſtudies, or, vocations; ſince *this* not only bleſſes and crowns *them* all; but, when *thoſe* ceaſe with age, will remain your chief work, and, great comfort at the cloſe of your days; and, will, moreover, accompany you beyond *death*, into *immortality*.

FINIS.

09 JUL 7